



## FIRE POLICE OFFICERS

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### FIRE POLICE OFFICERS

- Fire police officers are appointed by fire department chiefs.
- They are not peace officers and have no arrest powers.
- Their role is limited to traffic control and regulation at a fire drill or fire emergency.
- Disobeying the signals of a fire police officer directing traffic while performing his or her duties is an infraction.

### QUESTION

Who are fire police officers? What do they do?

### FIRE POLICE OFFICERS

The law authorizes municipal fire chiefs, within available appropriations, to appoint "fire department members or other persons," as they deem necessary, to be fire police officers ([CGS § 7-313a](#) of the 2014 supplement).

Such officers have the powers and perform the duties designated to them and authorized by their appointing authority. Their powers and duties include controlling and regulating traffic during fire drills or fire calls or at other times while serving with their fire department, any other fire department in an adjoining municipality

or district, or any fire department rendering mutual aid ([CGS § 7-313a](#) of the 2014 supplement).

Fire police officers are not "police officers" as defined in [CGS § 7-294a](#). This section defines a "police officer" as a sworn member of an organized police department, appointed constable who performs criminal law enforcement duties, certain appointed special policemen, or a law enforcement unit member who performs police duties. Fire police officers are not authorized to make arrests and a fire chief cannot grant them this authority. Also, they are not subject to the authority of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, which is responsible for training and certifying municipal police officers (among others) in the state (Attorney General's opinion, Sept. 21, 1993).

When performing their duties, fire police officers must wear their fire police badge in plain view. When directing traffic, they must wear a helmet with the words "Fire Police" in red letters on the front; any other headgear that meets national, state, and local traffic safety standards; or a regulation fire-police dress uniform cap. They must also wear a traffic safety vest and carry a flashlight that has a red or orange wand, both meeting specifications in law, and use a hand-held or portable traffic control device appropriate for the time of day, weather, and traffic flow.

The law allows a town's legislative body, by ordinance, to give property tax relief to volunteer fire police officers in the form of an (1) abatement of up to \$1,000 in property taxes due for any fiscal year or (2) exemption applicable to the assessed value of real or personal property up to an amount equal to \$1 million divided by the mill rate, in effect at the time of assessment, expressed as a whole number of dollars per \$1,000 of assessed value ([CGS § 12-81w](#)).

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